given a final ruling that India was dumping stainless steel flanges in the U.S.

(c) if so, what are the repercussions on India's export of stainless steel bars and trading operations; and

(d) what is Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER, OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) On 9 February, 1994 the United States International Trade Commission (ITC) made affirmative determination in the preliminary anti-dumping investigation concerning imports of stainless steel bar to the effect that there is a reasonable indication that a U.S. industry is materially injured or threatened with material injury by reason of imports of stainless steel bar from Brazil, India, Italy, Japan and Spain that are allegedly sold in the United States at less than fair value.

(b) In February, 1994 the United States ITC concluded its investigation concerning import of stainless steel flanges from India and Taiwan. The ITC determined that an industry in the United States is threatened with material injury by reason of import of stainless steel flanges from India and Taiwan at less than fair value.

(c) Pursuant to the United States ITC preliminary determination, the U.S. Department of Commerce and United States ITC will continue with the anti-dumping investigation for making a final determination. The U.S. Department of Commerce will make preliminary determination in June, 1994 as to whether imports of stainless steel bar in the United States were at less than fair value and, if so, will impose provisionsl anti-dumping duty subject to final determination.

(d) As anti-dumping actions are directed at the export pricing policies of the individual companies, the main role of the government is to see that such actions are carried out in accordance with the multilaterally agreed disciplines on the subject.

**Modification of PDS under GATT Conditionalities**

3681. SHRI BHUPINDER SINGH MANN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the GATT Agreement signed by Government lays down conditions that the Public Distribution System in signatory countries must satisfy substantial modifications;

(b) if so, what are these conditions;

(c) whether the existing PDS in India needs substantial modifications in the light of these conditions;

(d) what steps Government propose to take to implement such modifications; and

(e) what other modifications Government are contemplating so that the PDS will cover all the needy peopeople ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) to (e) Operations of Public Distribution System (PDS) in India are not subsidies to the farmer or the producer, but are considered consumer subsidies meant for the Urban rural poor to meet their food requirements. Such consumer subsidies are exmpt from GATT discipline. This is clearly written in the Agreement on Agriculture. In the said Agreement there is an explicit provision that supply of foodstuffs at subsidised prices to urban and rural poor in developing countries will not be affected by GATT disciplines. More over, India has stated in its Schedule

of Commitments to GATT that concessional sales through the PDS and other schemes for sales at subsidised prices with the objective of meeting basic food requirements as a social safety net are in conformity with the provisions of paragraph 4 of Annex 2 and the footnote to the Agreement. It is thus lclear that there is no need for any modifications in the existing PDS in India.

**Value and Weight of Imported Newsprint**

3682. SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL alias MEEM AFZAL Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state the value and weight of Newsprint imported from foreign countries during the period 1993-94?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): The quantity and value of newsprint imported during April-December, 1993 the latest period for which such data are available are given below:—

| Quantity ('000 M.Tons) | Value Rs. Crores | US $ Million |
|---|---|---|
| 221 | 318 | 10L (101) |

*Source :* Foreign Trade Statistics of India, December, 1993, (DGCI&S, Calcutta)

**Television warnings about Indian Tea in Russia**

3683. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) Whether Government are aware of the television warnings to the consumer in Russia about the consumption of Indian tea;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof stating the reasons for the Russian Government to warn the consumers taking Indian tea; and

(c) what steps have been taken by Government to counter the Russian campaign against Indian tea;

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) and (b) Tea Board's Office at Moscow reported that in a programme telecast on Moscow television channel (in Russian language) during the last week of September, 1993, a green tea packet labelled as 'Indian tea' was shown, followed by that appeared to be a spread out coarse material which looked like wood chips. There is no mention in the report of the Tea Board's Office at Moscow of any warning against the perils of consuming Indian tea in the said TV programme. Since the programme was in Russian language the meaning could not be deciphered by Director Tea Promotion, Moscow. However, according to Director Tea Promotion, Moscow it purported to be a display of inferior Indian tea. This programme has not been repeated and consequently it has not been possible to ascertain the exact nature and condition of the above-mentioned specific TV programme.

Director Tea Promotion, Moscow has reported that a lot of bad quality tea packets are entering into Russia from different sources. Such teas include Chinese, Indonesian, Vietnamese, Argentinean teas etc. and many of these teas are reportedly being labelled as 'Indian tea'. It has not been established that the teas shown on Russian television was the Indian tea.